

Application No. 10/024,242

Remarks

Applicants thank the Examiner for his careful consideration of the application.

Claims 1 – 21 are pending in the application.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 101

The Examiner rejected claims 1 – 18 under 35 USC § 101, because the claimed invention does not produce a real life, real world, useful, concrete, and tangible result. Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Claims 1 – 18 recite methods including the recording result of a comparison of a sensed current to a stored reference current. A history is kept that can be used at a later date. The Examiner has not shown that Applicant's method is nothing more than an abstract idea, a law of nature, or natural phenomena, which are the exceptions to the four categories of patentable subject matter enumerated by the Supreme Court. That would be because the method described by the Applicant is not one of the exceptions to patentable subject matter. The Examiner appears to be asserting that the concept is an abstract idea. However, the Examiner offers no justification to support this position.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

The Examiner rejected claims 1 – 17, 12 - 17, 19 and 21 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Denen et al. (US Patent No. 5,400,267) ("Denen"), in view of Miyahara (JP 404261382A) ("Miyahara"). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

In claim 1, Applicant recites an aberrant component detection method. The method includes storing, in a computer memory, a reference current indicative of proper functioning of a particular component, sensing current supplied to a group of components including the particular component while only the particular component draws current, comparing the current supplied to the group of components to the reference current, and recording a result of comparing the current to the reference current.

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In claim 12, Applicants recite an aberrant component detection method including recording a result of comparing a sensed current to a reference current, the sensed current being supplied to a group of components including the particular component while only the particular component draws current, the reference current being indicative of proper functioning of a particular component and being stored in a computer memory.

In claim 19, Applicant recites an aberrant component detection method. The method includes storing, in a computer memory, a reference current indicative of proper functioning of a particular component, sensing current supplied to a group of components including the particular component while only the particular component draws current, comparing the current supplied to the group of components to the reference current, and recording a result of comparing the current to the reference current, wherein recording a result comprises at least one of storing the result in a computer memory, displaying an alert when there is a discrepancy between the reference current and the current supplied to the group of components, and recording a circuit to which current was supplied during sensing.

The Examiner should withdraw the rejections to claims 1, 12, and 19 as the Examiner has failed to establish a prima facie case of obviousness. In order to sustain an obviousness rejection under 35 USC § 103(a), the Examiner must show that a combination of the cited references teach or suggest all the limitations of the claim being rejected. In re Royka, 490 F.2d 981, 180 USPQ 580 (CCPA 1974). Claims 1, 12, and 19 each recite sensing current supplied to a group of components including a particular component while only the particular component draws current. The Examiner asserts that Denen discloses this limitation at lines 65 – 68 and 1 – 5 of pages 9 – 10 and lines 20 – 21 of column 3. In the passages cited by the Examiner, Denen appears to disclose monitoring the current or voltage being supplied by a power supply and a reference current against which that current is compared as well as an in-device non-volatile memory that can be preprogrammed with identification data that may be used to identify a particular instrument or component. Neither of the passages cited by the Examiner appears to disclose the (1) the current being used by a group of components, while (2) only a particular component draws current. Hence, the Examiner has not shown that Denen discloses these limitations. The Examiner has also not identified these

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limitations in Miyahara. Therefore, the Examiner has failed to show that the combination of references teaches or suggests all the limitations of claims 1, 12, and 19. Therefore, the Examiner should withdraw the rejection to claims 1, 12, and 19.

Claims 2 – 7, 13 – 17, and 21 all depend from and include all the limitations of claims 1, 12, and 19 respectively and therefore, should be allowed if the underlying base claims are allowed.

The Examiner rejected claims 8 – 11, 18 and 20 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Denen in view of Motoyama (US Patent No. 5,400,267) ("Motoyama"). (Applicant assumes the Examiner meant to also include a reference to Miyahara in these rejections.) Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Claims 8 – 11 depend from claim 1, claim 18 depends from claim 12, and claim 20 depends from claim 19. Applicant argued that Denen and Miyahara did not disclose all the limitations of claims 1, 12, and 19 in response to the rejection to those claims. The Examiner has also not identified these missing limitations in Motoyama. Therefore, claims 8 - 11, 18, and 20 should be allowed if claims 1, 12, and 19 are allowed as claims 8 – 11, 18, and 20 depend from claims 1, 12, and 19.

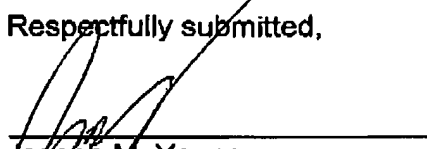
Conclusion

No additional fee is believed to be required for this amendment. However, the undersigned Xerox Corporation attorney hereby authorizes the charging of any necessary fees, other than the issue fee, to Xerox Corporation Deposit Account No. 24-0025. This also constitutes a request for any needed extension of time and authorization to charge all fees therefor to Xerox Corporation Deposit Account No. 24-0025.

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A telephone interview is respectfully requested at the number listed below prior to any further Office Action, i.e., if the Examiner has any remaining questions or issues to address after this paper. The undersigned will be happy to discuss any further Examiner-proposed amendments as may be appropriate.

Respectfully submitted,



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